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## **Performative Assessment Based on Expressive Reading as an Innovation in the Teaching of Arabic Poetry**

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### **Abstract**

Studies on performative assessment in Arabic language learning have primarily focused on speaking skills, while the use of expressive reading as a performative assessment strategy in Arabic poetry instruction remains underexplored. This study aims to develop a conceptual framework for expressive reading-based performative assessment and formulate relevant rubric components and criteria for teaching Arabic poetry. Employing a qualitative library research approach, the study involved the identification, selection, and analysis of literature on performative assessment, expressive reading, and Arabic literature pedagogy. The findings reveal that expressive reading functions as an authentic assessment strategy that integrates linguistic competence, literary interpretation, aesthetic appreciation, emotional engagement, and performative skills. The study also proposes a multidimensional rubric encompassing phonological accuracy, prosody, comprehension of meaning, emotional expression, alignment with poetic characteristics, and authenticity of interpretation. The study contributes theoretically by integrating performative assessment and expressive reading into the evaluation of Arabic poetry learning.

**Keywords:** Performative Assessment, Expressive Reading, Arabic Poetry, Assessment Innovation

### **A. Introduction**

Arabic poetry (syi'r 'Arabī) possesses distinctive linguistic and aesthetic characteristics, in which the phonetic and morphological structure of the Arabic language plays a crucial role in shaping the rhythm, sound patterns, and beauty of the poetry, thereby enhancing the aesthetic experience of readers and listeners. This makes poetry a form of expression that is not only communicative but also linguistically aesthetic (Mohammed, 2025). Poetry is viewed in literary

studies as a complex form of cultural expression and human experience that not only conveys literal meaning but also evokes emotional responses and thought through symbolic structure, rhythm, and the distinctive sound elements of poetic language (Akramova, 2025). Accordingly, the study of Arabic poetry should ideally go beyond a literal understanding of meaning or an analysis of linguistic structure; rather, it should also focus on the learner's ability to convey a deeper understanding of the text through expressive recitation.

As modern pedagogy evolves, there has been criticism of traditional assessment models in Arabic language learning. Conventional models that focus on memorization, literal comprehension, or grammatical analysis tend to overlook learners' ability to demonstrate their understanding in practical ways (Fitriani & Herdah, 2025; Mulyani & Sholeh, 2023; N. A. Rahmawati et al., 2025). Consequently, although learners are able to answer questions regarding the meaning of a text or its linguistic structure, they are not necessarily able to express that meaning orally or through performance. The existence of this gap between learners' cognitive and performative abilities in Arabic literature instruction highlights the need for an assessment model that is more relevant to their overall competencies.

Performative assessment has emerged as one innovation that addresses these challenges. Performative assessment emphasizes learners' ability to demonstrate their understanding through concrete actions, rather than merely through written responses (Altukruni, 2022; Makmuroh & Pratama, 2022). This means that this assessment measures not only theoretical knowledge or conceptual understanding, but also practical skills in interpreting, presenting, and authentically expressing literary texts. When studying reading instruction, performative assessment is used to evaluate learners' expressive abilities through prosodic aspects such as intonation, rhythm, and stress, which are linked to meaning (Binder et al., 2013; Groen et al., 2019; Morrison & Wilcox, 2020). This approach is relevant in the context of Arabic literature education for evaluating students' ability to engage with texts, grasp their deeper meanings, and adapt their expressions to the emotional context of the text.

An effective strategy for supporting performance-based assessment is expressive reading. Expressive reading emphasizes the learner's ability to convey the meaning of a text through intonation, pace, word stress, and vocal articulation (Bozorboyevna & Muxtorjonovna, 2025). It allows learners to demonstrate their understanding of literary texts directly, enabling teachers to assess not only their language proficiency but also their interpretive and appreciative skills (Qolbiyah et al., 2025). Moreover, expressive reading also plays a role in building learners' self-confidence, improving their communication skills, and fostering their interest and

motivation to learn, as learners are actively engaged in the learning process (Subedi, 2022; Yıldız & Ceyhan, 2021).

Studies on performative assessment in Arabic language learning have so far been primarily directed toward the evaluation of speaking skills (Fauzi & Rahmawati, 2025), whereas research on reading skills generally focuses on reading comprehension, pronunciation, or the development of reading test instruments (Al Usman et al., 2023; Kadar et al., 2026; Sholiha et al., 2023). On the other hand, international studies on expressive oral reading have expanded within the broader context of language learning (Bolaños et al., 2013), yet its application in performative assessment based on expressive reading of Arabic literary texts remains very limited. This indicates a relevant and urgent research gap that needs to be addressed, particularly in the context of formal education and classroom teaching practices. By understanding the principles and implementation of performative assessment based on expressive reading, educators can design learning strategies that are more effective, creative, and oriented toward learners' actual competencies.

This study contributes in three main aspects. Theoretically, this study expands the discourse on performative assessment in Arabic language learning by integrating the concept of expressive reading into the teaching of Arabic poetry, thereby producing a conceptual framework that links linguistic competence, literary interpretation, aesthetic appreciation, and learners' affective engagement. Methodologically, this study presents a systematic synthesis of various interdisciplinary literature on performative assessment, expressive reading, and literary pedagogy, which is then used to construct a conceptual assessment model relevant to the characteristics of Arabic poetry instruction. Practically, this study offers a multidimensional assessment framework along with operational rubrics that teachers can use as a guide in conducting assessments that are more authentic, objective, and oriented toward students' actual performance. Thus, this study not only fills a gap in research that has been limited to the theoretical aspects of Arabic literature instruction but also makes a tangible contribution to the development of evaluation practices in Arabic poetry instruction.

The following research questions were formulated based on this background and existing research gaps: (1) How can the theoretical concept of Expressive Reading-based Performative Assessment be implemented in the teaching of Arabic poetry? (2) What are the relevant components and criteria for developing an Expressive Reading-based performative assessment rubric for Arabic poetry? All of these findings and formulations were derived

through a systematic review of various literature to produce a comprehensive assessment model synthesis.

## **B. Method**

This study employs a qualitative approach using the library research method. This method was chosen because the study aims to examine, understand, and synthesize various theories, concepts, and findings from previous research related to performative assessment, expressive reading, oral reading fluency, and the teaching of Arabic poetry. Unlike field research, which collects empirical data from participants, this study focuses on developing a conceptual understanding of performative assessment based on expressive reading through a critical review of various relevant academic sources. The literature review was conducted using the Publish or Perish (PoP) software. The search was conducted using a combination of keywords in English and Indonesian, including performative assessment, performance-based assessment, expressive reading, oral reading fluency, reading prosody, poetry reading, Arabic literature learning, Arabic poetry, penilaian performatif, membaca ekspresif, and pembelajaran sastra Arab. The use of these various keywords was intended to obtain comprehensive and relevant literature focused on the research topic.

The selection of sources was based on several considerations, namely relevance to the research topic, academic credibility, and their contribution to the discussion of performative assessment and expressive reading in literature education. This study prioritized peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, and other academic publications published in English, Arabic, or Indonesian. In addition, this study focuses on publications from 2010 to 2026 to represent the latest conceptual and empirical developments, without neglecting important sources that form the theoretical foundation of the study. Sources that are not directly related to the research focus or do not provide sufficient theoretical contributions were not used in the analysis process.

With the literature collected, each source was reviewed by thoroughly reading the title, abstract, and content to determine its relevance to the research objectives. The selected literature was then organized based on key concepts, theoretical perspectives, research findings, and their implications for the application of performative assessment based on expressive reading in the teaching of Arabic poetry. Data analysis was conducted using content analysis (Miles et al., 2020). The analysis process involved identifying key concepts, coding recurring ideas, grouping findings into related themes, and interpreting the relationships between themes emerging from various sources. Through this process, several main themes were identified, including the principles of performative assessment, expressive reading competencies, oral

reading fluency, prosodic aspects, literary interpretation, and the development of assessment rubrics. Subsequently, these themes were synthesized to construct a conceptual framework for expressive reading-based performative assessment in the teaching of Arabic poetry.

Despite the fact that this study did not involve human participants, the principles of academic ethics were strictly upheld throughout the research process. All sources used were cited accurately and consistently in accordance with scientific citation guidelines to maintain academic integrity and avoid plagiarism. The process of searching for, selecting, and analyzing sources was conducted transparently to support the research's credibility. Furthermore, each work cited was presented objectively in its original context, without distorting its meaning or providing misleading interpretations. This study also respects copyright laws and applicable academic publication standards to ensure that the scientific integrity of the research is maintained.

### **C. Result and Discussion**

#### ***The Implementation of Expressive Reading as a Performative Assessment Tool in the Teaching of Arabic Poetry***

Research shows that expressive reading is an effective performative strategy for teaching poetry and literature (Bozorboyevna & Muxtorjonovna, 2025; Qolbiyah et al., 2025; Rosyidah et al., 2025), including Arabic poetry and literature. During expressive reading, learners not only read the text aloud but also convey its meaning through voice modulation, intonation, rhythm, pauses, word stress, and emotional expression appropriate to the text's content (Binder et al., 2013). Expressive reading naturally aligns with the characteristics of Arabic literature, which is rich in musicality, symbolism, and emotional depth. It involves not only phonological skills but also the ability to interpret meaning, understand the text's mood, and demonstrate sensitivity to the cultural context surrounding the text (Morrison & Wilcox, 2020).

In its implementation, expressive reading encourages learners to engage in deep reading through the processes of comprehension, interpretation, and internalization of meaning before performing. They are required to understand the text's main message, identify its emotional tone, and determine the most appropriate vocal techniques (Abilovna, 2025; Bozorboyevna & Muxtorjonovna, 2025). Comprehension and interpretation of the text are even regarded as key prerequisites for achieving expressive and communicative reading (Erekson, 2010). Furthermore, research indicates that the ability to read expressively is closely linked to the depth of understanding of the text being read (Binder et al., 2013; Paige et al., 2012). This means that

expressive reading is not merely a performative activity but also an analytical process that requires learners to connect the text's linguistic structure with its aesthetic value. In Arabic poetry, for example, learners must understand metrical patterns (*al-bihar al-'arudiyah*), stanza structure, and the relationship between meaning and rhythm (Azazmeh & Abdulrazak, 2024; Azzahro & Zuhdy, 2026; Ramadhan, 2025). In literary prose texts, learners need to grasp the narrative flow, characterization, and the emotional atmosphere of the story. These skills cannot be achieved through traditional teaching methods that emphasize only translation or grammatical analysis.

There are several pedagogical benefits to expressive reading. First, this technique improves learners' phonological skills, particularly in distinguishing between long and short vowels, the points of articulation of letters, and the characteristics of letters (Latifah & Apsari, 2024; Mizal et al., 2022). Precisely articulated pronunciation is essential for reading Arabic poetry expressively. Second, expressive reading develops prosodic skills specifically, the use of intonation and rhythm which help learners understand the pragmatic and semantic structure of the text (Patel & McNab, 2011; A. Rahmawati et al., 2020). Third, this technique enhances understanding and the construction of meaning, which form the basis of interpretive reasoning (Calet et al., 2019; Wolters et al., 2022). Learners are required to interpret texts critically in order to determine the appropriate style of expression. This interpretive process helps them uncover implied meanings, irony, symbols, metaphors, and emotional nuances that are often difficult to convey through writing alone.

Fourth, expressive reading also enhances affective skills. By reading texts expressively, learners engage their emotional side, which brings them closer to the text (Kristiansen et al., 2024). These have a positive impact on literary empathetic, the ability to feel the inner experiences of the author or characters in a literary work. Fifth, expressive reading has a significant motivational impact, as this activity enhances students' engagement and motivation to learn. It creates a more active, interactive, and enjoyable learning environment, ensuring that learners are not merely passive listeners but active participants in the learning process. This engagement also contributes to increased self-confidence and a positive attitude toward learning (Alfaleh et al., 2025; Amanda & Suryaman, 2022; Sandy & Mukti, 2020).

In any case, the implementation of expressive reading requires the support of teachers who understand the pedagogical principles of this technique. Teachers need to provide reading examples, train learners to use proper intonation, and guide them in understanding the meaning of the text (Kuhn, 2020; Young et al., 1996). Another challenge is the limited class time, especially when there are many learners. Therefore, some literature suggests blended learning

methods, such as having learners submit audio or video recordings for assessment so that teachers can conduct more accurate and in-depth evaluations. Altogether, expressive reading has proven to be a relevant strategy for performance-based assessment in literature education, including Arabic literature. This technique integrates language skills, literary interpretation, and oral performance into a single comprehensive and authentic activity. To provide a clearer synthesis of the reviewed literature, the findings are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Synthesis of Main Findings from the Literature Review

Main Theme	Key Findings	Implications for Arabic Poetry Teaching
Expressive Reading as Performative Assessment	Expressive reading enables learners to demonstrate comprehension through oral performance rather than written responses alone.	Assessment can be conducted more authentically by evaluating learners' actual literary performance.
Development of Phonological Competence	Expressive reading improves pronunciation accuracy, articulation, vowel length distinction, and phonological awareness.	Learners become more capable of reading Arabic poetic texts accurately and aesthetically.
Enhancement of Prosodic Skills	Appropriate use of rhythm, intonation, stress, and pauses supports meaning construction and literary appreciation.	Teachers should integrate prosodic training into Arabic poetry instruction.
Improvement of Literary Interpretation	Students must interpret themes, symbols, emotions, and implied meanings before performing texts.	Poetry learning shifts from literal understanding toward deeper literary interpretation.
Development of Emotional Engagement	Expressive reading encourages emotional involvement and literary empathy.	Students develop stronger appreciation of aesthetic and affective dimensions of Arabic poetry.
Motivation and Active Participation	Reading performance activities increase learner engagement, confidence, and motivation.	Poetry learning becomes more interactive and student-centered.
Need for Multidimensional Assessment Rubrics	Reliable assessment requires multiple dimensions beyond pronunciation accuracy.	Teachers need comprehensive rubrics to ensure objective and transparent evaluation.

The synthesis indicates that expressive reading functions not only as a learning activity but also as an authentic performative assessment strategy. The reviewed studies consistently demonstrate that expressive reading integrates linguistic competence, literary interpretation, emotional engagement, and oral communication skills. These findings suggest that Arabic poetry instruction should move beyond traditional grammar-oriented assessment and adopt multidimensional evaluation approaches that reflect learners' actual performance.

Consequently, expressive reading provides a pedagogically relevant framework for assessing both language mastery and literary appreciation in an integrated manner.

### ***Components and Criteria of a Performance-Based Assessment Rubric for Expressive Reading of Arabic Poetry***

Findings from the literature review indicate that the assessment of expressive reading cannot be reduced to a single linguistic aspect alone. Instead, it must employ a multidimensional rubric that encompasses expression, phrasing, fluency, and reading pace so that learners' performance can be evaluated objectively and systematically (Arikan et al., 2022; Hudson et al., 2008; Morrison & Wilcox, 2020). Therefore, assessment indicators need to be formulated in a detailed, operational, and observable manner.

First, the phonological accuracy, which encompasses the place of articulation, the nature of the letters, vowel length, and the clarity of articulation. Phonological accuracy forms the foundation of performance, as errors in this area can alter the meaning of a word or detract from the beauty of the recitation. In classical Arabic poetry, phonological accuracy is of paramount importance because it is closely tied to the musicality of the verse. Second dimension is prosody, which refers to the ability to use intonation, word stress, rhythm, pauses, and tempo appropriately. Prosody is closely linked to meaning and emotion in literary texts. In texts that depict sadness, for example, a slow tempo and soft intonation are usually more appropriate, while heroic texts require stronger vocal stress.

Third dimension is comprehension of meaning, which refers to the learner's ability to demonstrate an understanding of both the literal and implied meanings of the text being read. Comprehension of meaning is evident in the choice of expression, interpretation of intonation, and accurate emphasis on key parts of the text. This dimension assesses the depth of the learner's interpretation of symbolism, relationships between ideas, emotions, and moral messages within the text. Fourth dimension is emotional expression, which encompasses the learner's ability to display appropriate emotions without overdoing it. This expression is not only vocal but can also be seen through facial expressions or hand gestures during the performance, as long as it does not distract from the focus on reading the text.

Fifth dimension is fluency, which refers to the ability to read without unnecessary pauses, without repeating words, and without losing rhythm. Reading fluency indicates a good grasp of the text as well as the learner's readiness to perform. Sixth, the alignment of performance with the text's character that is, the learner's ability to adapt their reading style to

the text type (classical poetry, modern prose, free verse, etc.). Each literary genre possesses distinct aesthetic characteristics, and thus its expressive demands also differ. Seventh dimension is the authenticity of performance, where learners demonstrate a personal style of interpretation, rather than merely imitating the teacher's example or a recording. Creative interpretations that remain true to the text's meaning are considered high-quality performances.

The literature also emphasizes the importance of rubric transparency. Teachers need to provide learners with assessment rubrics before expressive reading activities take place, so that learners understand the expected standards. This transparency reduces subjectivity and improves the quality of learners' performance. Additionally, the use of a rating scale (1–4) is important for providing a fair range of assessment. A comprehensive performance-based rubric not only facilitates the teacher's assessment but also serves as a diagnostic tool capable of identifying learners' weaknesses in specific areas, such as phonological accuracy or interpretive skills. Hence, the rubric serves not only as an assessment tool but also as a pedagogical tool to enhance the quality of learning.

**Table 2.** Operational Rubric for Assessing Expressive Reading Performance in Arabic Poetry Learning

Dimension	Observable Indicators	4 (Excellent)	3 (Good)	2 (Fair)	1 (Poor)
<b>Phonological Accuracy</b>	Pronunciation of sounds, makhārij al-ḥurūf, vowel length, articulation clarity	Pronunciation is consistently accurate with no noticeable phonological errors	Minor pronunciation errors that do not affect comprehension	Several pronunciation errors affecting fluency and clarity	Frequent pronunciation errors affecting meaning and intelligibility
<b>Prosody</b>	Intonation, stress, rhythm, pauses, and tempo	Intonation, rhythm, and pauses consistently reflect the meaning and mood of the poem	Prosodic features generally support meaning with occasional inconsistencies	Limited variation in intonation and rhythm; meaning only partially conveyed	Monotonous reading with inappropriate stress, rhythm, and pauses
<b>Reading Fluency</b>	Smoothness, continuity, and reading flow	Reads smoothly without hesitation, repetition, or disruption	Occasional hesitation but overall reading remains smooth	Frequent pauses and repetitions interrupt reading flow	Reading is fragmented, hesitant, and difficult to follow
<b>Comprehension of Meaning</b>	Demonstration of understanding through oral delivery	Performance clearly reflects deep understanding of both explicit and implied meanings	Demonstrates good understanding of most parts of the poem	Shows only partial understanding of the poem's meaning	Limited evidence of understanding during performance

<b>Emotional Expression</b>	Vocal expression and emotional appropriateness	Emotion is conveyed naturally and consistently supports the poem's atmosphere	Emotional expression is generally appropriate to the text	Emotional expression appears limited or inconsistent	No meaningful emotional expression is demonstrated
<b>Alignment with Poetic Characteristics</b>	Adaptation of reading style to the poem's genre, theme, and aesthetic features	Reading style strongly reflects the literary and aesthetic characteristics of the poem	Reading style generally matches the poem's characteristics	Limited adaptation to poetic style and aesthetic features	Reading style does not reflect the characteristics of the poem
<b>Authenticity of Interpretation</b>	Personal engagement and originality of performance	Demonstrates a creative and original interpretation while remaining faithful to the text	Shows some personal interpretation with adequate textual alignment	Interpretation relies heavily on imitation with limited originality	Performance merely reproduces the text without personal engagement

Overall, the development of a rubric for performance-based assessment of Arabic literary texts through expressive reading must take into account the integration of linguistic, aesthetic, interpretive, and emotional aspects that are characteristic of Arabic literature. A well designed rubric is capable of objectively describing the learner's performance while reflecting the aesthetic values inherent in the literary work.

### ***The Limitations of This Study and Recommendations for Future Research***

This study has limitations because it is entirely based on a literature study, thus not including empirical evidence regarding how performative assessment based on expressive reading is actually implemented in real classroom settings. This limitation prevents the study from describing the pedagogical dynamics, practical challenges, or the responses of learners and teachers when this strategy is directly applied. Furthermore, the literature specifically addressing the integration of performative assessment and expressive reading in the context of Arabic literature instruction remains relatively limited, resulting in an analysis that is more conceptual in nature and relies on the synthesis of existing theories. These limitations open the door for further exploration, particularly regarding the validity of assessment instruments, the effectiveness of the strategy across various types of literary texts, and its impact on learners' interpretive and performative competencies.

For this reason, further research is recommended to conduct empirical studies whether through classroom action research, experiments, or in-depth qualitative studies to test the

effectiveness of this assessment model in real-world learning contexts. Such empirical studies will provide a more concrete picture of changes in learners' competencies, the feasibility of the strategies from a pedagogical perspective, and teachers' readiness to implement them. Additionally, research and development (R&D) studies are also needed to design, validate, and test operational, reliable, and contextual performance-based assessment instruments grounded in expressive reading, so that they can be systematically implemented in the teaching of Arabic poetry across various levels of education.

Further research could also explore teachers' and learners' perceptions of expressive reading as an assessment strategy, as well as conduct quantitative and qualitative validation of the assessment rubric developed. Additionally, the research can be expanded by comparing expressive reading with other performative strategies, testing its application at different educational levels, and examining diverse school or institutional contexts to enhance the relevance and generalizability of the expressive reading-based performative assessment model in Arabic literature instruction.

#### **D. Conclusion**

This study demonstrates that performative assessment based on expressive reading is a relevant and innovative assessment approach in the teaching of Arabic poetry because it is capable of simultaneously integrating students' linguistic competencies, literary interpretation, aesthetic appreciation, emotional engagement, and performative skills. Based on a literature review, this study developed a conceptual framework and a multidimensional rubric that encompasses phonological accuracy, prosody, comprehension of meaning, emotional expression, reading fluency, alignment with text characteristics, and the authenticity of interpretation. The theoretical novelty of this study lies in the integration of the concepts of performative assessment and expressive reading into the teaching of Arabic poetry, which has traditionally focused more on comprehension, grammar, or reading skills in isolation. Contextually, this study expands the discourse on the evaluation of Arabic literature education by offering an assessment model that is more authentic and oriented toward students' actual performance.

Even so, this study remains conceptual in nature because it is based on a literature review and has not yet tested the implementation of the developed model in a real-world learning context. Therefore, future research should conduct empirical validation of the effectiveness of the proposed model and rubric through experimental research, classroom action research, or research and development (R&D) at various levels of education. In practical terms,

the results of this study can serve as a reference for Arabic language teachers in designing a more comprehensive, objective, and student-centered assessment system. Moving forward, the integration of performative assessment and expressive reading has the potential to become a new direction in Arabic literature, which not only measures language proficiency but also builds students' interpretive skills, aesthetic appreciation, and creative expression in a more meaningful way.

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